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C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 001413

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SA, SA/INS, IO, IO/T, INL/C/CJ(BROWNE)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/24/2014

TAGS: [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [AORC](#) [CE](#)

SUBJECT: COLOMBO PLAN: MISSION QUESTIONS ON PROPOSED  
ALTERNATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

REF: SECSTATE 180466 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Charge' d'Affaires James F. Entwistle. Reasons 1.4(b,d)

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[11.](#) (C) Mission has received reftel proposed constitutional amendment for the Colombo Plan and requests the Department to clarify language in the proposal:

-- The organization's Consultative Committee, which meets biennially, is the highest decision making body. In the approximately 24 months between meetings, decision making passes to the Council, which meets regularly in Colombo. Should the question arise or require clarification from member states, does the Department include both the Consultative Committee and the Council when defining a member state's loss of decision-making right?

-- The Colombo Plan fiscal year runs from July 1 - June 30. The Colombo Plan Secretariat considers a country in arrears if twelve months have elapsed since the annual assessment request, i.e., July of the preceding calendar year. Does the Department's proposed amendment intend for calendar year or fiscal year to be the reference time frame?

-- Consistently throughout previously developed versions of a proposed amendment on arrears, the majority of member countries felt that four years of arrears was the benchmark for initiating sanctions on member states for non-payment. What are the arguments to support a two-year benchmark? Mission anticipates that this subject will arise during discussions within the Working Group.

-- The proposal allows for a member state's reinstatement of decision-making rights upon agreement of an approved amortization plan. Does the Department envision the Council as the approving body for such an amortization plan or may the Council convey authority to the Secretary-General to sign on the organization's behalf?

[12.](#) (SBU) The Colombo Plan President customarily chairs working groups in the organization. At the August 4 Colombo Plan Council meeting, the presidency passed to Maldives. With recent events in Maldives, the High Commissioner has been otherwise engaged and her availability and schedule for a working group have not yet been determined.

ENTWISTLE